



Patient Advocacy in Neurological Services in Ireland



Historical Deficits

The Irish neurological sector has a poor historical record in advocating for improved services and supports.

Following massive health spending increases in the Celtic Tiger era, Ireland still had:

- Lowest per capita number of neurologists and rehabilitation medicine consultants in Europe.
- 1 in 6 patients getting specialist neurorehabilitation.
- Massive deficits in acute care for many conditions.
- 37% waiting over 6 months for neurosurgery; 38% neurology outpatients waiting over 1 year for appointment.

End of the Boom

How can we achieve better services amidst Ireland's economic collapse?

By using credible evidence to build support for initiatives we can prove will save lives, reduce disability and improve quality of life and *will also* save money or at least be cost neutral.





Signs of progress

Great strides being made on specific conditions such as stroke, epilepsy and Alzheimer's.

Three years ago Irish stroke services worst in western Europe with 25% of deaths blamed on inadequate services.

A massive expansion of acute services and dedicated stroke physician, specialist nurse and therapist post have significantly reduced stroke deaths and disability and are reducing overall service costs.

This achieved by building evidence base; strong lobbying and comms platform and stroke survivor involvement.



Rehab
for
stroke
TODAY

Rehab
for
stroke
TODAY

One
stroke
every
hour.



IRISH HEART
FOUNDATION
Fighting Heart Disease & Stroke

Stroke
Rehab
NOW

Strike
Out
Stroke

Strike
Out
Stroke

Stroke
Rehab
NOW

**VOTE FOR BETTER
STROKE SERVICES**

It could just save your life!

One in six people in Ireland will have a stroke. That means either you, or someone you love, is almost certain to be affected. So please help us ensure that when stroke strikes you get the services that could save your life and enable you to make the best recovery possible.

Every year hundreds of people die when their lives could have been saved. And hundreds more are forced to spend the rest of their lives completely dependent on others....all because of often grossly inadequate stroke services.

The General Election campaign is now under way. When candidates call to your door, you can help to get a better deal for stroke victims by asking them what they will do to deliver better services.



Gary Smith

"I had my stroke last summer at the age of 37. Rapid emergency treatment saved my life, but too many others aren't so lucky. You can help stop this needless suffering by voting for candidates who are most committed to improved stroke services."



Wider issues

Individual organisations can make gains and all lobbying by neurological organisations lifts the entire sector.

But there are wider issues of common importance that can only be tackled together. This is why the Neurological Alliance of Ireland exists.

- Umbrella of 30 member organisations.
- Recognised as a key voice in shaping the response to neurological conditions in Ireland.
- The only umbrella organisation dedicated to highlighting and representing issues affecting people with neurological conditions.



NAI's Work

- Information and Policy Development
- Advocacy
- Promoting Awareness of Neurological Conditions within Ireland
- Supporting members
- Building a platform for the recognition of the needs of people with neurological conditions

Advocacy achievements

- Publication of National Neurorehabilitation Policy and progress on implementation.
- Needs within acute neurology services now being addressed.
- Greater priority for neurological services

Increasing sector's lobbying power a key factor in further progress.

IRELAND GETS A RED CARD FOR NEUROLOGICAL CARE

In May 2013, Ireland will host European Month of the Brain as part of our EU presidency. However, services for over 700,000 people in this country living with neurological conditions are among the worst in Europe.

RED CARD

Many people have to wait over a year for a neurology appointment in Ireland. In the UK, the maximum waiting time is 19 weeks.

RED CARD

Ireland has the fewest rehabilitation consultants per capita in Europe. Sixteen months ago the Government published a national neurorehabilitation strategy but there is still no implementation plan.

RED CARD

Continuous cutbacks mean that vital neurological services are being curtailed or cut down completely.

The **Neurological Alliance of Ireland (NAI)** is the national umbrella for over 30 neurological groups. We urge Oireachtas members to support people with neurological conditions during Brain Month by:

- Calling for an implementation plan for the national neurorehabilitation strategy.
- Highlighting issues affecting your constituents with neurological conditions and calling for improved services.



Neurological Alliance of Ireland

The background of the slide is decorated with several purple circles of varying sizes. Some are solid purple, while others are hollow with a thin purple outline. They are scattered across the slide, with a higher concentration in the upper half.

Thank you

To find out more visit

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Neurological Alliance of
Ireland